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THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

AUGUST 1st, 1863.

ESSAY ON MUSIC.

From the 'Penny Cyclopædia.'

(Concluded from page 82.)

The Musical scale, or disdiapason, of the Greeks comprised two octaves, the lowest note of which was A, the first space in the bass of the moderns. This was divided into five Tetrachords, or subdivisions of four sounds in each, the extremes being at the distance of a fourth. And it must here be observed, that the ancient lyre had but four strings; the first and fourth fixed, the middle ones admitting of being tightened or relaxed according to the genus of the melody. Two conjoint tetrachords, with one additional note, formed the Octachord, or octave, to which the improved lyre extended. The three different divisions of the tetrachord produced as many Genera, the Diatonic, the Chromatic, and the Enharmonic. The first was composed of the sounds which the moderns name E, F, G, A; the second of E, F, F \sharp , A; the third of E, E \sharp , F, A. The notes, or sounds, were represented by the letters of the alphabet, great and small, which, in order to extend their application and distinguish the various modes, were placed in different positions—the direct, the averted, the inverted, and the horizontal; and these were, as occasion required, altered in form. The time, or duration, of the notes was known by the long and short syllables to which they were set; the long syllable was in duration as two; the short as one. But we know only the comparative times of these; of the positive lengths of notes we remain in ignorance. The movement however of Greek music is supposed to have been slow. The Modes were, according to Alypius, fifteen in number: Aristoxenus makes them thirteen, each a semitone distant from the next in order. We here insert the table of modes of Aristoxenus, the oldest of the Greek writers on music, which commences with the Hypodorian, the lowest.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Hypodorian | B |
| Hypophrygian, <i>grave</i> .. | C |
| Ditto, <i>acute</i> .. | C \sharp |
| Hypolydian, <i>grave</i> .. | D |
| Ditto, <i>acute</i> .. | D \sharp |
| Dorian, | E |
| Ionian, | F |
| Phrygian, | F |
| Æolian, or <i>grave Lydian</i> .. | G |
| Lydian, <i>acute</i> .. | G \sharp |
| Mixolydian, <i>grave</i> .. | A |
| Ditto, <i>acute</i> .. | A \sharp |
| Hypermixolydian | B |

It will be here observed, that what may be

called the key-note of the various modes does not agree with that in the table before given. In the above we have followed the Abbé Barthélemy, after having in vain resorted to numerous authorities for some means of reconciling the discrepancy. No two writers on this obscure subject are thoroughly agreed, and it is probable that none in future will attempt to explain that which holds out so little hope to labour and patience, and offers so small a reward for success. The three principal and most ancient modes had different characters: the Dorian was grave and majestic; the Lydian, soft and complaining; the Phrygian, bold, enthusiastic, and used in religious ceremonies. Plato banished the Lydian and Ionian modes from his Republic, because exciting the enervating passions; but the Dorian and Phrygian he allowed, as manly and decent. Pindar set his fourteenth Olympic ode to the Lydian, as being addressed to the Graces. According to Lucretius, the Phrygian was employed in the horrid solemnities of Cybele; and Statius introduces it in the funeral rites of Archemorus.

By the word μέλος (*melos*) the Greeks generally signified what we call air, or something like it; but sometimes, Twining remarks, 'they used it in the sense of ἁρμονία, i.e., *melody* abstracted from rhythm, or time: sometimes for *measured melody*: and sometimes as equivalent to *song*, including melody, rhythm, and words.' By ἁρμονία (*harmonia*) they intended simply to express, as we have in a former article observed, the proper relationship of one sound to another—the pleasing agreement of intervals; that is to say, melody. Metastasio believes that by this term the Greeks signified what we mean by melody, founding his opinion on the following passage from Plato (*De Legib.*, lib. ii.):—*The regulation of the movement is called rhythm; but the regulation of the voice is called harmony.* Rousseau says—'The sense given by the Greeks to this word, in their music, is the more difficult to ascertain because, having originally been a proper name, it has no roots by which it can be decomposed in order to arrive at its etymology. In the ancient treatises which remain, *harmony* seems to be that which had for its object an agreeable succession of sounds as regards high or low, in opposition to the other parts called *rhythmica* and *metrica*, which relate to time and measure.' But though very difficult to determine with exactness the meaning of the word harmony as applicable to Greek music, yet this difficulty does not arise from the cause assigned by the French writer.

The long-contested question, whether the Greeks understood counterpoint, or music in parts, seems now to be set at rest, and determined in the negative by a preponderating weight of authority and a large majority of voices. To what we have before remarked on this subject we now add, that further inquiry and reflection

have only confirmed the opinion we have long entertained, namely, that though the ancients, by mere accident, if not from experiment, must have been acquainted with the effect of simultaneous sounds, nevertheless that which we call harmony formed no part of their musical art, either theoretically or practically. And we repeat our belief, that in the union of poetry and song, which undeniably operated with such amazing force on all classes of the people,—which inflamed them with ardour, softened them into obedience, and melted them into pity,—music was but the ally of verse.

Of their instrumental music, or music without the voice, we are told that the flute-players by profession—who certainly were exceedingly encouraged and most extravagantly paid for their services in the later times of Greece—piqued themselves chiefly on the strength of the sounds they could produce from the instrument; and that the trumpeters thought themselves fortunate if, in their contests at the public games, they escaped without the rupture of a blood-vessel by the violence of their exertions. It is to such performances Aristotle must allude in saying, 'I disapprove all kinds of difficulties in the use of instruments, and, indeed, in music generally; I mean such tricks as are practised at the public games, where the musician, instead of recollecting what is the true object of his art, endeavours only to flatter the corrupt taste of the multitude.' Facts and remarks like these do not lead to any favourable opinion of Grecian performers. It is likely, however, that they pleased most when they played the airs set to the favourite poems and popular verses. And there seems some reason to believe that they extended these by additions, sometimes studied, but often extemporaneous, resembling what are in modern language called variations, or an amplification of the theme.

It was a tradition that Cadmus, with his Phœnicians, introduced music into Greece. But Plutarch, in his 'Dialogue on Music,' first makes Lycias, a professor of the art, repeat the statement of Heraclides, that Amphion, the son of Jupiter and Antiope, taught the Greeks to compose and sing lyric poetry: then, by a second interlocutor, Soterichus, contradicts the first, assigning to Apollo the merit of having converted Greece into a musical nation. The invention of the lyre of three strings is given to the Egyptian Mercury, or Thoth; that of seven strings, to the second or Grecian Mercury. Chiron, the centaur, taught Achilles music. Orpheus was the musical pupil of Linus, and master of Hercules. Then came Olympus, Terpander, and others. Terpander is said to have appeased an insurrection in Lacedæmon by his songs. He rendered a most important service to the art by inventing a method of representing musical sounds. Till his time music was quite traditional, and depended on the memory, and sometimes

the caprice, of the performer. Plutarch says of him, on the authority of Alexander, an historian, that he took Homer for his model in versification, and Orpheus for the style of his melodies. The musical compositions of Orpheus, the same writer adds, were wholly original.

Many very celebrated players on the flute are mentioned in musical history. Damon taught Pericles and Socrates the use of this instrument. Antigenides and Dorion were also renowned for their talents. But the performer who excited most admiration was of the gentler sex. Lamia was no less distinguished by wit and ability than by personal charms. After captivating many by her skill as a flute-player, and by her beauty, Demetrius Poliorcetes became violently enamoured of her, and, through her influence, conferred such extraordinary benefits on the Athenians, that they dedicated a temple to her. Whatever may have been the style of flute-playing, or of the music, it is certain that in Greece the performers were in great favour. Xenophon says, that if an indifferent player wished to pass for one of superior talent, he must furnish his house richly, and appear abroad with a large retinue of servants, as the great performers do. It is said that a flute used by a celebrated Theban musician, Ismenias, cost nearly six hundred pounds sterling.

Pythagoras, of whom an idle story was long current, about a blacksmith's shop, hammers, and anvils, contributed much to the improvement of music by his calculations and philosophical experiments. To him also is attributed the addition of an eighth string to the lyre. His notion concerning *the music of the spheres*—music produced by the motions of the heavenly bodies—was one of those whims in which great geniuses are apt, now and then, to indulge. He was of the sect of severe musicians, of those who reduced music to mathematical precision, and regulated all sounds by calculations, allowing no licence to the ear. Of an opposing school was Aristoxenus, born at Tarentum in Italy, about 350 years B.C., who thought the ear entitled to share with mathematical principles in determining the effect of modulated sounds. He was a most voluminous writer on many learned subjects. Of these his *Elements of Harmonics* are all that have reached us, and stand first in the collection published by Meibomius. Next in that excellent work is an *Introduction to Harmonics*, by Euclid, the geometrician; and this is followed by his *Section of the Canon*, containing short and clear explanations of the constituent parts of Greek music. Ptolemy, an Egyptian, and not the astronomer, wrote a treatise in three books on *Harmonics*, which Dr. Wallis printed, with a Latin version, a preface, and appendix, in 1682. He enters at large and deeply into the subject, and his principles have a tendency to reconcile the hostile sects of Pythagoreans and Aristoxenians. This object was pursued with suc-

cess, by Sir F. H. Styles, in his paper published in the 51st volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*. In Plutarch's 'Dialogue on Music' much information concerning ancient Greek music is to be found, but not of the most valuable kind. Aristides Quintilianus wrote a treatise on music, printed in the collection of Meibomius, which has proved a useful work to all subsequent writers on the subject. He was enthusiastic and fanciful, but in matters of fact and calculation is worthy of confidence.

The Romans acquired all their knowledge of the arts and sciences from the Greeks; their music therefore in no way differs from that of the latter; though they must have had some kind of song before any direct intercourse had taken place between them and the polished nations of Greece. It is certain that the art was never advanced by that warlike people, notwithstanding the share it had in all their religious ceremonies and public games, and the use made of it to animate their troops and add effect to their triumphs, and though it formed an essential part of their theatrical exhibitions of every kind, and was even adopted, or affected to be adopted, as a profession by one of their emperors.

The importance of music in the estimation of the early Romans is shown by a regulation attributed to Servius Tullius, who, in dividing the people into two classes, directed that two whole centuries should consist of *trumpeters, blowers of the horn, &c.*, and of such as, *without any other instrument, sounded the charge*. It is further proved by a law of the Twelve Tables, which limited the number of *players on the flute* at funerals to ten. And another of those laws enacted, that at the praises of honoured men in the assemblies of the people, there should be mournful songs accompanied by a flute. But a passage in Livy leaves no doubt on this subject, and being as curious as it is illustrative, we shall give it entire, availing ourselves of Dr. Burney's translation. 'I should omit a circumstance,' he says, 'hardly worth mentioning, if it did not seem connected with religion. The *Tibicines* (or flute-players), taking offence at the preceding censors for having refused them the privilege of eating in the temple of Jupiter, according to custom, withdrew in a body to Tibur (Tivoli), so that there were no performers left to play before the sacrifices. This created religious scruples in the minds of the senators, and ambassadors were sent to Tibur to persuade the fugitives to return to Rome. The Tiburtines promised to use their utmost endeavours to this end, and first summoning the discontented band before their senate, exhorted them to return to Rome: but finding them deaf to reason or entreaty, they had recourse to an artifice well suited to the dispositions of these men; for, on a certain festival, they were all invited, under pretence of assisting in the celebration of a feast. As men of this profession are generally much addicted to wine, they

were supplied with it, till, being quite intoxicated, they fell fast asleep, and in this condition were flung into carts, and carried to Rome, where they passed the remaining part of the night in the Forum, without perceiving what had happened. The next day, while full of the fumes of their debauch, upon opening their eyes they were accosted by the Roman people, who flocked about them, and having been prevailed upon to stay in their native city, they were allowed the privilege of strolling through all the streets in their robes, three days in every year, playing on their instruments, and indulging in those licentious excesses which are practised on the same occasion to this day' (that is, to the time of Augustus). 'The privilege of eating in the temple was also restored to such as should be employed in playing before the sacrifices.' This happened 309 B.C. 'The Roman flute-players,' Burney adds, 'were incorporated, and formed into a *college* or company.' Ovid, in his 'Fasti,' (lib. vi.), acknowledges the importance of the *Tibicines*, and repeats in verse the above story of Livy, but drops the scruples of the *Patres Conscripti*.

That the Roman drama was in some way musical, is proved by the title, or *didascalia*, prefixed to each of Terence's plays. A further proof of this is found in the Institutes of Quintilian, where, after showing the necessity of instructing children in music, he adds, 'that he does not desire that they should learn such music as prevails on the stage, the modulations of which are so intermixed with impudence and wantonness, that they may justly be charged with having extinguished the poor remains of manly courage which had been left.' That the theatrical music of the Romans was similar to that of the Greeks there seems to be little doubt; that it was distorted by the performers in Quintilian's time is very likely.

It is remarked by Dr. Burney, that even during the Augustan age the Romans had no sculptor, painter, or musician, and but one architect, Vitruvius; those, he says, 'who have been celebrated in the arts at Rome having been Asiatics or European Greeks, who came to exercise such arts among the Latins as the Latins had not among themselves. This custom was continued under the successors of Augustus; and those Romans who were prevented from going into Greece contrived in a manner to bring Greece to Rome, by receiving into their service the most able professors of Greece and Asia in all the arts.'

The Roman writers on music are few, and almost worthless. Vitruvius, in his work on architecture, treats of the sound of the voice, of reverberating vases, and of a *water-organ*; but no one has yet been able to discover what he means by this instrument. He also endeavours to make plain the harmonical system of Aristoxenus, though he acknowledges the difficulty of the task. St. Augustin wrote on rhythm and metre; Boethius devotes five books to music,

merely to explain the principles of harmonics; and Aurelius Cassiodorus treats of music, among other things, but his work, or sketch, is said to consist of little more than some general definitions and divisions.

There is every reason to conclude that music remained stationary till the tenth or eleventh century. The Romans, having borrowed the art from Greece, seem to have been convinced of its perfection in the state in which they received it, for there is no evidence of their having attempted to enlarge its narrow boundaries, or in any way to improve it; though a people of more ingenuity and taste would have advanced it at least a few steps towards that point which it slowly has attained.

In the primitive Christian church the service consisted partly of music, which is supposed to have been chiefly that of the Greeks, with an admixture of Hebrew melody. Menestrier conjectures that the early ecclesiastical manner of singing was like that of the ancient theatre, and Dr. Burney concurs in this opinion; though we cannot but think it more likely that the 'songs of Zion,' as performed in the Jewish temple, and the chanting of the hymns at the Pagan altars, were chosen as vocal models for devotional purposes, rather than the airs, or recitatives, in which the comedies of Plautus and Terence were delivered. Towards the end of the fourth century, St. Ambrose digested a musical service for the church of Milan, which is called the Ambrosian chant, and was founded on four of the Greek modes. About the year 600 Gregory the Great enlarged and much improved the chant of the church, by the admission of four other modes, and gave it that form which it still retains in the Catholic service, and in which it is known by his name. According to Bishop Stillingfleet, music was introduced into the English church by St. Augustin, in the latter part of the sixth century, and was subsequently much improved by St. Dunstan, an excellent musician, who, it is said, furnished some few churches with an organ.

The organ—the most majestic and comprehensive of all musical instruments in its present almost perfect state—is supposed to have been an improvement of the hydraulicon, or water-organ, of the Greeks. The first mentioned in musical history was sent, in 757, as a present to King Pepin, from the Byzantine emperor Constantine Copronymus. In the tenth century the organ was in use in several parts of Europe; but it is reasonable to conclude that it was then exceedingly simple, possessing little power, and rude in mechanism: nevertheless, it may fairly be assumed that the invention of the organ hastened the discovery or practice of harmony.

To Guido, of Arezzo, we are indebted for many of those improvements in music which led to our present system; though the origin of counterpoint has been erroneously ascribed to that active and ingenious ecclesiastic. *Magister* Franco, a

member of the cathedral of Cologne in the eleventh century, is considered as the inventor of what in the middle ages was called *Cantus Mensurabilis*, which meant, notes showing, by their forms, their time or duration. Most of those, however, have fallen into disuse, for the shortest in his table is the semibreve. Nevertheless, his system, carried out further by De Muris, and by degrees extended, till it has proceeded to an extravagant length—is that of the present day, and is so sound in principle that it probably will never be abandoned.

From the eleventh to the fifteenth century scarcely anything is known of the progress of music.

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BLECHINGLEY.—A choral wedding was given to Miss Gould (daughter of H. Gould, Esq.) and Captain Gorrom, of the Royal Artillery, on the 22nd of July; the lady was *prima donna* of Mr. L. S. Palmer's concerts. The choir of St. Mary's Church took this opportunity of shewing her a slight attention for the services rendered by her to the Choral Society. The music was well performed, the choir doing great credit to Mr. Palmer, their director. The Gloria from Mozart's *Twelfth Mass* was given as the bridal party left the church.

CAMDEN TOWN.—The Sacred Choral Society of this district recently gave a very creditable performance of Haydn's *Creation* in the Bedford New Town School-room. The soloists were Madlle. Charlier, Miss Marion, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Matthews. Mr. Carpenter conducted, and Mr. Woolvine led the band.

CARDIFF.—Handel's *Israel in Egypt* was performed at the Music Hall on July 15th, by the Cardiff Choral Society. The solo singers were Mrs. Merest, Miss Allen, Mr. Merrick, Mr. Edwards, and Mr. John. The chorus numbered about 150. Leader of the band, Mr. Waite, Conductor, Mr. Rees Lewis.

CHELTENHAM.—The Annual Collegiate Concert took place on the 20th ult. in the Assembly Rooms. The orchestra consisted of a band and chorus of about 100 in number, the latter being composed exclusively of young collegians. The whole was under the direction of Mr. J. O. Smith. The concert opened with Haydn's *Passione* and a selection of sacred music; after which there were various secular pieces which had been carefully practised. The attendance was numerous, and the concert went off with éclat.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—The concerts at the Palace have been carried on during the past month with much spirit and success. Among the performers have been Madlle. Carlotta Patti, Madlle. Fricci, Signors Guaziani, Naudin, Ciampi, and the young Polish violinist, M. Lotto. The concert on Saturday the 11th was given as M. Thalberg's "Farewell recital," the great performer having pledged himself never to play in London again. There was an unusually large attendance, but the difficulty of hearing the instrument in the large orchestra was felt by all who had omitted to pay for reserved seats. He played the fantasia on *Mose in Egitto* "A te o cara," The last Rose of Summer, Home, sweet Home, and an arrangement of Russian airs, in all of which he was rapturously applauded.

EXETER.—Two performances of vocal and instrumental music took place at the Royal Public Rooms, on July 3rd, mainly for the purpose of exhibiting a new organ, built by Mr. Dicker, of Exeter, and for which the services of the organist of the Town Hall, Birmingham, were secured. The vocalists were Miss Bessie Risdon and Miss Julia